



COUNCILMEMBER IKAIKA ANDERSON DISTRICT 3 UPDATE—MAY 2009

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CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE MEETING SCHEDULE

Tuesday, June 2

Zoning	9 am
Public Infrastructure	1 pm

Wednesday, June 3

Budget	9 am
Executive Matters	1pm

Thursday, June 4

Transportation & Planning	9 am
Public Safety & Services	1pm

District 3 Staff

Paulyne Anakalea
Executive Secretary

Gail Myers
Senior Adviser

Andrew Malahoff
Senior Legislative Aide

Venus Acoba
Legislative Aide

Sharon Basmayor
Community Aide

Fiscal Year 2010 Budget

July 1 is the start of the City's fiscal year and the City Council continues working on a finalized budget for the upcoming fiscal year. Fortunately the State has shelved the various proposals which aimed to balance their budget on the backs of city property tax and rate-payers. Yet the City still faces some very real financial challenges. It is my hope that we will be able to make further reductions to the administration's proposed budget. Where those cuts can be made and, more importantly, how any savings will be distributed remains to be seen.

Of course the first place where any realized savings should be applied is to our property tax rates. Most of you are probably aware that real property taxes are the primary source of the City's operating revenues. With the continuing decline in tourism, other sources of City revenues are similarly declining. For the City to maintain existing levels of services, we are ultimately faced with two basic options: either reduce services or increase rates and taxes. Ask any number of people and you'll find that a vast majority would almost always oppose raising rates and taxes. But ask that same group of people which programs and services they would be willing to do without to offset any increases and their answers will vary greatly. One of the greatest difficulties in evaluating the necessity of a

government services is that their existence can almost always be justified. An interesting paradox is that services which are substantially subsidized by tax dollars are usually the ones for which the greatest demand exists, whereas reductions in services which are fairly self-sustaining would not provide any real relief to our taxpayers.

There are still some basic services which the City provides without a direct user charge. We need to assess whether the institution of direct user charges have any real benefit to our taxpayers. For most of the City's core "free" services, I don't think it's likely our taxpayers would see any real net savings. If there's relative agreement that the current level of City services is what needs to be sustained our attention really needs to be focused on the future and the implementation of new programs and services. We also need to start looking at ways to establish our budgetary priorities beforehand instead of waiting until the budget is before us to

try to reach a collective agreement on our priorities. I believe this is a discussion that is long overdue and needs to begin once the Council has completed its current budget deliberations.

Certainly there has always been talk about "drawing lines in the sand" and establishing "baselines" as a means for making historical comparisons between budgets. By clearly establishing our priorities and having an acknowledged reference point to measure changes in expenditures, elected officials would be better able to ensure that truly necessary services would not be adversely affected when financial conditions tighten. Similarly, when the economy is flourishing this would help to minimize the chances of non-essential and costly programs being undertaken. Certainly there are services we would all like to see the City provide or participate in but we also need to remember that it is far easier to start a government service than to end it.

"Cell-phone ban" effective July 1, 2009

Last month the City Council approved a bill which, upon signature by the Mayor, will prohibit the use of handheld electronic devices while operating a motor vehicle.

It is important to note that this law will take effect on July 1 so you should make sure to obtain a hands-free device for your phone by then—if you wish to continue using your phone while driving!

District 3 Events

3TALKS

"3Talks" are held throughout the district every month. All 3Talks start at 7pm and the public is encouraged to come and meet with their Council-member and staff.

Tuesday, June 16
St. John Lutheran Church
1004 Kailua Road

Wednesday, July 22
Waimanalo Public Library
41-1320 Kalanianaʻole Hwy.

Tuesday, August 18
Kaneohe Community &
Senior Center
45-613 Puohala Street

Upcoming Community Events

June 12—American Cancer Society's Waimanalo Relay for Life; Waimanalo District Park

Additional information: www.cancer.org

Neighborhood Board On-line voting!

May 6-22 you can vote for your Neighborhood Board representatives on-line.

Additional information: www.honolulu.gov/nco

If you have not yet received your instructions in the mail, contact the Neighborhood Commission office at 768-3710

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Quite often our office will receive calls from our constituents seeking assistance with a specific problem. Below are answers to some of the more common questions. We hope that you will find these answers helpful should you have a similar question or concern.

Q: Where can I get information on my Real Property Taxes?

A: You can access property tax information such as: current and past assessments and bills, appeal information and various forms online at: www.honolulupropertytax.com

Q: What do I do if I want to testify on, or need information about a Council bill or resolution?

A: Contact the City Clerk's office at 768-3822 or District 3 staff at 768-5003

Q: How can I get a second refuse, greenwaste or recycle bin?

A: Call 768-3401 for refuse matters and 768-3200 for greenwaste or re-

cycling matters. Online information available at www.opala.org

Q: How much longer is my street going to be torn up?

A: The City provides a weekly update on road work in the various Council districts. You may log onto www.honolulu.gov and click on "Road Work Weekly Report" for information regarding your particular area, or contact our office 768-5003

Q: Where can I report a general city problem at my convenience?

A: While you can always contact our office for help with a problem, you can also report a variety of problems on-line by visiting: <http://www.honolulu.gov/csd/publiccom/>

